

Customer No.: 31561
Docket No.: 11690-US-PA
Application No.: 10/707,082

REMARKS

Present Status of the Application

Claims 1-14 remain pending of which claims 1, 5, 7 and 13-14 have been amended without prejudice or disclaimer in order to more explicitly describe the claimed invention. It is believed that no new matter is added by way of amendments made to claims in order to more clarify the claimed invention. For at least the following reasons, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-14 are in proper condition for allowance. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Discussion of the claim objections

4. Claims 1-4 and 7-14 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 7, line 4, "...outputting a row turn off signal..." is believed to be a typographical error.

In claims 1 and 7, the first circuit block and the second circuit block are claimed to be "capable of" outputting a column/row turn off signals. It has been held that the recitation that an element is "capable of" performing a function is not a positive limitation.

In response thereto, applicant so amended the claims 1 and 7 in order to overcome the preceding Examiner's objects.

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Discussion of rejections to claims under 35 U.S.C. 112

7. Claims 1-4 and 7-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph.

In claim 1, lines 10-16, "a switch device coupled to the memory cell, ..., the switching device is turned off so as to disconnect a coupling between the power supply terminal and the defect memory cell,..."

The switch device cannot disconnect the coupling between the defect memory cell from the power supply terminal if the switch device is not claimed to be coupled to the defect memory cell, but the memory cell.

As side notes, was "the defect memory cell" intended by "a memory cell" (line 4) and "the memory cell" (lines 7 and 10)?

In response thereto, applicant so amended the claim 1 and 7 to clarify that there does exist an interconnection between the switch device and the defect memory cell. In the amended claims 1 and 7, the recitation "a switch device coupled to the memory cell, a power supply terminal, a sensing amplifier, the column selection line and the row selection line, wherein when the memory cell is the defect memory cell (emphasis added), both the column selection line receives the column turn-off signal and the row selection line receives the row turn-off signal so that the switch device is turned off and a coupling between the power supply terminal and the defect memory cell is disconnected," definitely clarify the defect memory cell is coupled to the switch device and a coupling between the power supply terminal and the defect memory cell can be disconnected through turning off the switch device.

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Discussion for rejections to claims under 35 USC 102 and 103

9. Claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C 102 (b) as being anticipated by Kirihata (US 5,619,460)

In response thereto, applicant respectfully traverses the preceding rejection based on the following arguments. To establish a prima facie case of anticipation, the prior reference (i.e. Kirihata) should teach, suggest or disclose all limitations of independent claims 5. From "ABSTRACT" and drawings, in Kirihata, there only discloses "if a group contains a known defective cell word line, that group is either not addressed or its selection is disabled." Thus, in Kirihata, the defective cell is not addressed through disabling the selection line, rather than through turning off a switch device coupled to the defect cell as claimed in the amended claim 5.

Accordingly, Kirihata fails to teach, suggest or disclose "coupling a switch device to the memory cell, a power supply terminal, a sensing amplifier, the column selection line and the row selection line; and turning off the switch device through coupling a column turn-off signal to the column selection line and a row turn-off signal to the row selection line when the memory cell is detected to be the defect memory cell," as claimed in the amended claim 5. Namely, the amended claim 5 is not anticipated by Kirihata and thus patentable.

11. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Kirihata in view of Arimoto (US 2003/0103368)

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In response thereto, applicant respectfully traverses the preceding rejection based on the following arguments. To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, the prior references (i.e. Kirihata and Arimoto) should teach, suggest or disclose all limitations of claim 6. Although the Examiner alleged that paragraph [0611], in Arimoto, discloses the link to where there is a short is blown, actually, the blown link doesn't mean its turning off signals are controlled by stand-by signal, as claimed in the claim 6. Thus, Arimoto cannot render the claim 6 obvious.

Furthermore, as the claim 6 is dependent claim, it should be patentable as a matter of law for the reason that it contains all limitations of its patentable base claim 5.

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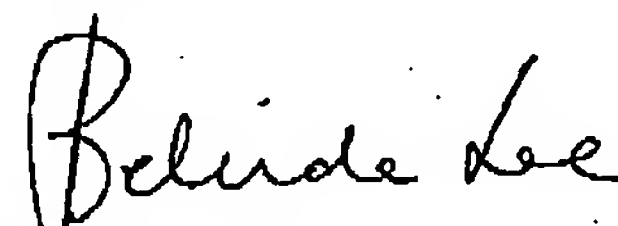
CONCLUSION

For at least the foregoing reasons, it is believed that all the pending claims 1-14 of the present application patently define over the prior art and are in proper condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would expedite the examination of the above-identified patent application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned.

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Respectfully submitted,


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